

said blend comprises rayon fibrous material and [PET] polyethylene terephthalate fibrous material.

13. (Once Amended) A bi-functional nonwoven fabric wipe in accordance with claim 11, wherein:

said first outer layer consists essentially of rayon fibers, and said second outer layer comprises a blend of [PET] polyethylene terephthalate fibers and rayon fibers.

REMARKS

Responsive to the Official Action mailed May 1, 2002, applicant has amended the claims of his application in an earnest effort to place this case in condition for allowance. Specifically, claims 5 and 14 have been canceled, independent claim 1 amended, and dependent claims 4, 6, 7, 10, and 13 amended. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

In the Action the Examiner noted an informality in the specification which has been corrected.

In the Action, the Examiner objected to an abbreviation which appeared in claims 10 and 13. In accordance with the Examiner's suggestion, this abbreviation in each of these claims has been revised to the full name of the relevant compound.

In rejecting the claims under 35 U.S.C. §112, the Examiner referred to language in claim 1 relating to the relatively soft and relatively abrasive surfaces of the present nonwoven fabric. The language of claim 1 has been revised to now specify that the first expansive surface of the present bi-functional fabric exhibits a first surface texture, while the second expansive surface of the fabric exhibits a second surface texture *which is more abrasive than the first surface texture*. It is believed that this rejection can now be

withdrawn, since the claim specifies the relative abrasive characteristics of the second surface with respect to the first surface of the nonwoven fabric wipe construct.

In the Action, the Examiner rejected the pending claims under 35 U.S.C. §102 and §103, with reliance upon U.S. Patent No. 6,022,818, to Welchel et al., U.S. Patent No. 4,753,839, to Greenway, U.S. Patent No. 5,302,446, to Horn, U.S. Patent No. 5,282,900, to McDonell et al., and U.S. Patent No. 3,493,462, to Bunting, Jr., et al. However, as set forth in the amended claims, applicant's bi-functional nonwoven fabric is believed to be patentably distinct from these references, even when combined, and accordingly, the Examiner's rejections are respectfully traversed.

As set forth in the amended claims, the present bi-functional nonwoven fabric wipe provides opposite, first and second expansive surfaces which exhibit differing surface characteristics to enhance the versatile use of the wipe construct. A first expansive surface of the fabric exhibits a first surface texture, which may be relatively soft in comparison to the second surface, while the second surface of the wipe is more abrasive than the first surface.

Notably, the abrasive characteristics of the second expansive surface are provided by the application of a binder composition to this surface. While the use of binder compositions is known for providing coherence in a fibrous structure, the present invention contemplates that the differing surface characteristics of the opposite expansive surfaces be provided by the application of a binder composition *only to one surface* of the bi-functional wipe construct. There is clearly no teaching or suggestion in the cited references of providing a bi-functional fabric wipe as claimed, and accordingly, reconsideration of the Examiner's rejections is respectfully requested.

The Welchel et al. patent contemplates a nonwoven composite structure wherein absorbent fibers are entangled with matrix fibers so as to form an absorbent-rich side to the fabric. The patent contemplates that the absorbent fibers act as a fluid retention region for liquids absorbed through the associated matrix fiber portion. Thus, this patent principally contemplates differing *liquid handling* characteristics of the fabric construct, without regard to the relative softness and abrasiveness of the surfaces. As acknowledged by the Examiner, there is no teaching in this reference of employing a binder composition on the surface of one side of the fabric to form a bi-functional fabric wipe.

The Examiner has also acknowledged that the Greenway patent is deficient in this regard. While Greenway broadly suggests that a multiple layer fabric construct can be formed from various combinations of blends of fibers, there is no teaching or suggestion in this reference of providing a fabric having at least two layers, wherein the respective first and second expansive surfaces of the layers exhibit differing abrasive characteristics. As such, it is respectfully maintained that the present fabric is neither taught nor suggested by these generalized statements in the Greenway reference.

The Horn patent contemplates a skin care wipe, wherein the fibrous material from which it is formed comprises a significant portion of thermally fusible plastic fibers. Again, it is respectfully maintained that this patent is clearly deficient in teaching or suggesting applicant's construct, as claimed, including an expansive surface having a binder composition applied thereto for enhanced abrasiveness.

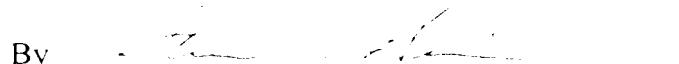
In the Action, the Examiner has combined the teachings of Greenway and Welchel, et al., further in view of the McDonell et al. reference. As noted, neither Greenway nor Welchel et al. teach or suggest applicants' bi-functional fabric construct, as

claimed. It is respectfully submitted that McDonell et al. clearly fails to overcome the deficiencies in the teachings of the principal references. In McDonell et al., the abrasive characteristics of the disclosed fabric are provided by *abrasive particles*, which the patent describes as being adhered by a binder composition. As such, this patent clearly fails to teach or suggest the use of a *binder composition*, for enhancing the abrasiveness of one surface of a bi-functional fabric. There is simply no contemplation of such a fabric construct in McDonell. As such, this reference fails to overcome the deficiencies in the teachings of the Greenway and Welchel et al. references.

The Examiner has made reference to the Bunting, Jr., et al. patent in connection with those claims specifying the present fabric construct as including an intermediate layer. However, Bunting, Jr., et al. fails to teach or suggest a bi-functional fabric construct, as claimed. There is clearly no teaching or suggestion in this reference of employing a binder composition for enhancing the abrasiveness of one surface of a fabric construct to thereby provide bi-functional characteristics.

In view of the foregoing, formal allowance of claims 1-4, 6-13, and 15 is believed to be in order and is respectfully solicited. Should the Examiner wish to speak with applicant's attorneys, they may be reached at the number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

By 
Stephen D. Geimer, Reg. No. 28,846

WOOD, PHILLIPS, KATZ, CLARK & MORTIMER
Citicorp Center, Suite 3800
500 West Madison Street
Chicago, Illinois 60661-2511
312/876-1800